

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1224

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, March 19, 2007

Title: An act relating to cost savings on course materials for students at community and technical colleges.

Brief Description: Regarding cost savings on course materials for community and technical college students.

Sponsors: Representatives Kelley, Sells, Pedersen, Fromhold, Ormsby, Hasegawa, Upthegrove, Skinner, Appleton, Wallace, Roberts, Kagi, Kenney, P. Sullivan, Darneille, Simpson, McDonald, Moeller, Schual-Berke, Morrell, Green, Barlow and Lantz.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/28/07, 91-3.

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 3/15/07, 3/19/07 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Shin, Chair; Kilmer, Vice Chair; Delvin, Ranking Minority Member; Berkey and Schoesler.

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

Background: A study conducted by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) stated that college textbook prices nearly tripled from December 1986 to December 2004. These prices increased by 186 percent, while tuition and fees increased by 240 percent, and overall inflation was 72 percent during the same time period. The GAO study attributes textbook cost increases to several factors. The primary reason the cost of textbooks has increased in recent years is because of "bundling," which is the addition of supplemental materials, such as CD-ROMs. Another factor cited in the study was the frequent revision of textbooks. Each of the six public baccalaureate institutions in the state is affiliated with a bookstore. In 2006, the Legislature passed legislation requiring the boards of regents of the state universities, regional universities, and The Evergreen State College to work with affiliated bookstores, students, and faculty representatives to adopt rules for affiliated bookstores, and directed faculty to consider price when assigning course materials. The legislation did not include community and technical colleges.

Summary of Bill: Community and technical colleges must adopt rules for their affiliated bookstores. The institutions' rules must provide students with the option to purchase unbundled materials when possible, provide for the disclosure of changes to textbooks and

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costs, and promote book buy-backs. Faculty are required to consider the least costly practices in assigning course materials.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: These benefits should be extended to community college students. Faculty are aware of the costs of textbooks to students and do take that into account when making textbook decisions. The real cause of high textbook prices is bundling.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Kelley, prime sponsor; Phil Jack, American Federation of Teachers Washington.